The POORS Advocate

Epitomized.

OR,

Christs Call

TO

RICH MEN,

In behalf of his *Poor Members*, who are in such *Want*, that they *want words* to expresse it. And all for *want* of the Faithfull discharge of their *Stewardships*, whom *God* hath put in Trust, to *Provide for his Great Honshold* or FAMILY.

By *R. Younge* of *Roxwell* in *Essex.*

Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first fruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses burst out with new wine, Prov 3.9,10.

The liberal person shall have plenty, Prov.11.25.

He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack; Prov. 28.27.

He is ever merciful and lendeth, and his seed enjoyeth the blessing, Ps.37.25,26.

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THE POORS ADVOCATE *Epitomized.*

CHAP. I.

HArd *times*, and *harder hearts*, call for Theams of mercy; and require both the *tongues* and *pens* of *Chryſoſtom*; who for his frequencie therein, was called *The Poors Advocate*, and *The Prelate of Mercy.*

When *vertue* came down from *Heaven* (as the *Poets* feign) *Rich men* ſpurned at her, *wicked men* abhorred her, *Courtiers* ſcoft at her, *Lawyers* and *Citizens* hated her; and being thruſt out of doors in every place, ſhe came at length to her ſiſters poverty and affliction, and of them found entertainment, where ſhe hath abode ever ſince. But *charity* her Neece, finding that every one in this laſt age; *even from the leaſt to the greateſt is given unto covetouſneſs, Jer.* 6. 13. ſhe hath taken her wings, and is quite flown out of the world, without hope of ever returning. *Math.* 24. 12.

If we obſerve it, our *bleſſed Saviour* ſaith *Luke* 18. *When the Son of Man cometh, ſhall he find faith on the earth, verſ* 8. ſo when the ſon of man cometh, ſhall he find *charity in the earth?* no, but the contrary as is to be feared. *Becauſe iniquity ſhall increaſe, love ſhall wax cold, Math.* 24. 12.

Of all other graces mentioned in the *Bible*, the grace of *charity* and *bounty* to the *Poor*, hath the moſt and weightieſt inducements to it, and the greateſt and primeſt promiſes of reward, to us and ours, both here and hereafter annexed unto it. And which is exceeding conſiderable, No ſin ſhall be laid to our charge, when we ſhall *give an account of our Stewardſhips*;

But

But uncharitableneſs. As mark our *Saviours* words when he ſhall ſit upon his *Throne*, *Math.*25. (for me thinks it calls for the greateſt attention, of any text in the *Bible*.) At the great and Dreadfull *Day of Judgment*, the upſhot of all, and main point which *Chriſt* will ſcan ſhall be: you have, or you have not ſhewn mercy to his poor members, Math.25.33, to 46. mark it I pray you, the *ſentence of abſolution* or *condemnation*, ſhall be pronounced, either for or againſt us, according as we have *performed* or *neglected* this duty: To thoſe that have fed the hungry, cloathed the naked, viſited the ſick, &c. *Come ye bleſſed of my father, inherit the Kingdom, prepared for you from the foundation of the World:* and contrariwiſe to thoſe that have not done theſe works of mercy; *Depart from me ye curſed, into everlaſting fire prepared for the Devill and his Angels.* O that we could well mind and remember! that no ſin but unkindneſs to our *Saviour* in his ſuffering members, ſhall then be caſt into our diſh, to the feeding of that never dying *worm of conſcience.*

O that this leſſon, would enter home into every one of *our hearts*; before we goe out of *our houſes*: For men may cry up this ſide, and cry down that ſide; but of all the three; the *Prieſt*, the *Levite*, and the *Samaritane*; none but the *Samaritane* (that ſhewed mercy unto him that was faln into the hands of thieves, was wounded and ſtript of his rayment) was juſtified, and approved of by *our Saviour*, *Luke* 10.36,37. But that we may the more mind and lay it to heart; give me leave to nominate ſome of the grounds, reaſons and inducements, that every wiſe man, (even out of ſelf love) will allow for weighty: in which alſo I will be as brief as poſſibly I can, for otherwiſe they are ſo many, that only to name them all, would by worldlings be thought too much. Conſide each particular as you go along.

CHAP. II.

IN the *firſt* place, *God hath* not only *commanded* us to contribute liberally to the poor, both in the *old and new teſtament*: but ſo as without it, there is no being ſaved, *Deut.*15.7.

10, to 16. *Levit.* 19.10. and 25.35. *Isa.* 58.6,7. *Pro.* 25. 21. *Luke* 3.11. and 6.34. and 11.41. *Rom.* 12.20. *Matth.* 5.42. 2 *Cor.* 8.7. *Mat.* 25.42,43. *James* 2.13. *Pro.* 21. 13. Now hath *God* ſo ſtrictly commanded this duty? and ſhall not we make conſcience thereof. Yea, do we enjoy all things through *Gods* bleſſing? and can we think to keep our riches by diſobeying his Commandments?

Secondly, He hath given us *all* we have, that we may impart *ſome part* thereof to others that want? we are not *owners* but *almoners*, *Stewards*, not independent *Lords* of what we do poſſeſs. We have every one our *talents lent us*, more or leſs. The *wealth of the rich*, is but depoſited in their hands, to ſupply the *neceſſities of the poor*: as the wealth of the *ſeven plentiful years*, ſupplied the want of the *ſeven barren*. Our *redundancies* ſhould be a ſupply of others *ſcarceties*: as in the caſe of *manna*, that there may be ſome equality, which was a type of this, as the *Apoſtle* ſhews, 2 *Cor.* 8.14,15. *God* hath ordained all for the common good, and commanded all creatures to be communicative: and ſo they are in their ſeveral places. The *Moon* borroweth her *light* from the *Sun*, not to keep, but to give the ſame unto the *dark corners* of the earth; ſhe takes from the *Sea*, that ſhe may give to the *leſſer rivers*. The *liver* miniſtreth blood to the *heart*, the *heart* miniſtreth ſpirits to the *brain*, the *brain* to the whole *micracoſm*, ſo what gift or tallent any one hath, all are given us for one end, to do good withal. How happy are we if we improve them well, to his honour that gave them. But

Thirdly, If inſtead of feeding the hungry, and cloathing the naked; we bring in an account of ſo much ſpent in *dainty fare*, and *gorgious apparrell*; ſo much in *ſtately buildings*, and *coſtly furniture*; ſo much in *rich jewels*, and needleſs *vanities*; ſo much laid out in *feaſting*, and *banqueting*, in *hounds*, *Coaches* and *horſs*, *hauks* and *harlots*; ſo much conſumed in *riot*, *luxury* and *dunkenneſs*; in that *witch Tobacco*, in *gaming* and *revelling*, in *playes* and *interludes*, ſo much ſpent in needleſs *journeys*, *ſuits of law*, in giving *bribes* and *entertainment* of *rich friends* and *Neighbours*, all prodigally fooliſhly and wickedly waſted, in the pleaſures of fine and voluptuous delights, or otherwiſe

wiſe miſer-like hoorded up, and hid in a napkin: Then ſhall we hear that dreadful ſentence of *our Saviour*, *Mat.*25. which will make our *hearts* to *ake*, and our *joynts* to *tremble*. And certainly we muſt unreaſon our ſelves, before we can think, that *God* hath cauſed this unequallity of eſtate amongſt men, becauſe he reſpecteth the rich, and neglecteth the poor; and would have them pampered with all ſuperfluities, and delicious dainties; and the other ſtarved with want and penury. but hereby he would exerciſe the divers graces, which he hath given to his *Church* and people; as namely the *charity*, *liberality* and *fidelity* of the rich, in diſpenſing of their tallents; and the faith, affiance and patience of the poor, that being approved, both might be crowned, at the day of *Chriſts* appearing. According to that of *Baſil*, Why, ſaith he, doſt thou abound with riches, and he want neceſſaries? ſurely that thou mayſt receive the reward of thy faithful diſpenſation, and he alſo after many conflicts and victories, might have the reward and crown of his patience.

CHAP. III.

FOurthly, every act of *charity*, is but an act of *equity*: it's not the *beſtowing* of your *gifts*, ſo much as the paying of your *Debts*. The poor are ſo the owners of our ſuperfluities, as that it is not ſo much ours, as theirs: *withhold not the goods from the owners thereof, or from them to whom it is due*, *Prov.* 3. 27. To which accords that of *Baſil*, It is the *bread* of the hungry which mouldeth in thy *cupboord*, it is the *coat* of the naked which hangeth uſeleſs in thy chamber or wardrobe, they are the ſhooes of him that goeth *barefoot*, which ly rotting by thee; it is the *ſilver* of the needy which *ruſteth* in thy *cheſts*; and ſo many thou doſt injure, as thou canſt and doſt not relieve in their wants and miſeries. Yea, *Ambroſe* ſays expreſsly, that it is a like faulty, and blame worthy, to take from the right owners, and to deny neceſſaries to the poor, when we have abundance. And therefore know ſaith he, that thou ſpoileſt ſo many of their goods, as thou denieſt relief unto, when thou art able to give it; which makes *Laurentius*

bold to affirm, that the Rich offend more, in not giving their ſuperfluities; then the poor do, in ſtealing neceſſaries: And let all ſuch be aſſured, that as they turn away their eyes from the poor, in the day of their miſery: ſo the *Lord* will turn away his face from them, in the day of their calamity. And *as they have ſtopped their ears at the cry of the poor, ſo they* themſelves *ſhall cry & God will not hear them*; as it is *Pro.*21.13.

Fifthly, Whereas he that ſheweth mercy, when it may beſt be ſpared; ſhall receive mercy, when it ſhall moſt be needed: ſo contrarywiſe to thoſe that have not done theſe works of mercy, it ſhall be ſaid, *Depart from me ye curſed, into everlaſting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels, Mat.* 25.42,43. yea, hear how terrible *St. James*, the *Apoſtle* of mercy is, to thoſe monſters among men, that want bowels! *James* 2. *There ſhall be judgment without mercy, to him that ſhews no mercy, ver.* 13. to which may be added that of *our Saviour, with the ſame meaſure that you meet withal, it ſhall be meaſured to you again, Luke* 6. 38. And that of the wiſe man, *Who ſo ſtoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor: he alſo ſhall cry himſelf but ſhall not be heard, Pro.*21.13. In vain they cry to us for charity, and for mercy we ſhall cry in vain to *God*: Thou haſt not been merciful ſays *Bazil*, and thou ſhalt not find any: thou haſt not opened thy gates to the poor, and *heaven Gates* ſhall be ſhut againſt thee: thou haſt not given them a *morſel of bread*, and *the bread of life* ſhall be denied thee. Wherefore take heed & *beware, that there be not a thought in thy wicked heart, or that thine eye be evil againſt thy poor brother, and thou giveſt him nought, and he cry unto the Lord againſt thee, but thou ſhalt ſurely give him, and not harden thy heart, neither ſhalt thou be grieved, when thou giveſt unto him: but thou ſhalt open thy hand wide unto him, and ſhalt ſurely lend him ſufficient for his need, &c. becauſe that for this thing, the Lord thy God ſhall bleſs thee, in all thy works, and in all thou putteſt thine hand unto*: as it is *Deut.*15 7, to 16.

But that unmerciful men, may have nothing to alleadge for themſelves, either at the *hour of death*, or at the *day of judgement*: *Our Saviour* hath given them ſeveral inſtances or *examples*. I'le name but two only, and thoſe are enough

enough to make all unmerciful men tremble: the one is *Dives* that would not give *Lazarus* a *crum of bread*, to aſſwage the pinching hunger of his body here; therefore *Lazarus* ſhall not give *Dives a drop of water* hereafter; to quench the thirſt, and cool the heat of his ſcorching ſoul. The other is that *cruel ſervant*, *Matth* 18. who for want of ſhewing mercy to his *fellow*, as his *Lord* had done to him, was delivered to the tormentors, and caſt into *Hell*, *ver*. 28. which whole chapter I would wiſh all cruel, and unmerciful men to read, and lay to heart if ever they look to be ſaved. Yea, take notice I beſeech you, and for ever remember; that although his *Lord* had immediately before been moved with compaſſion to looſe and forgive him, the whole debt, and all former reckonings: yet now he hath his *pardon cancelled*, becauſe he would not ſhew mercy, as he had found mercy; this new ſin of his, called all the reſt to remembrance. *O that all* eruel and unmerciful *Nabals*, would hear, believe, and *lay* this *to heart*; before they feel the truth of it, in thoſe *everlaſting flames, with Dives and that unthankful and unmerciful ſervant.* The counſel is good, reject it not. I remember St. *Bernard*, uſeth theſe words, Had we ſtood by, ſaith he, when *Adam* was between the *perſwaſion of his wife*, and the *precept of his God*; when the one ſaid *Adam eat*, and the other ſaid *Adam eat not*; For if thou doſt *thou ſhalt dy the death, and all thy poſterity*: had it been an ill office to have cried out, and ſaid, *O Adam take heed* what thou doſt? or would he have had cauſe to complain, of being prevented? I trow not. Yea, I think it had been a ſeaſonable piece of high friendſhip, and none can deny it. O that thou wouldſt but lay this to heart! Nor doe I ask any more, but that you will *now hearken unto Chriſt, as you would have Chriſt another day hearken unto you.*

But for fear of it, I could wiſh, that *our Saviours* laſt words at the laſt day (were fairly written over every *unmerciful mans Table.*) *Depart from me ye curſed, into everlaſting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels: For I was an hungry and ye gave me no meat*, &c. *Mat*. 25. 41, 42, 43. O that they would bethink themſelves before it proves too late, and before *the draw-bridge* be *taken up*, that there is not the leaſt *drop of water*

for such *Dives's in Hell*, who have not *a crum of bread* for poor *Lazarus's* on *earth*. Me thinks I could take up the lamentation of *St. James*, and sound it in the ears of *Rich and unmerciful Cormorants*; *Go to now ye Rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you, your riches are corrupted, and your garments moth-eaten; your gold and silver is cankered, and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire; ye have heaped up riches together for the last days, ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter, &c. James* 5. 1, to 7. A place worth the minding by all that are rich: for *that God should give the rich so much, and they give the poor so little*; I cannot but admire!

CHAP. IV.

These are some of the grounds and inducements that might move any wise man, to the performance of this duty: But these are not the one half. For *Sixthly*, the blessings and benefits that are annexed and promised to all, that out of obedience and love, doe perform this Christian duty, according as *God* hath inabled them, are so many and rare: that as one would think they should inflame and ravish any soul with desire to perform it, and joy in the doing of it. For *the Scriptures no less abound with promises of this nature, then silver did in the days of Solomon*. I may but name them here, if you would see each particular confirmed fully and undeniably proved, read *the Poors Advocate*, and that Smal *Treatise, intituled, An infallible way to fare well in our bodies, names, estates, pretious souls, and posterities*. Now as I name the particulars, you shall doe well to mind, and after remember them Namely, That *God* hath promised to bless the merciful man, in his *temporal, civil, spiritual and eternal estate*; that there is *no such way to grow rich*, as by being bountiful to the poor. That it is the most certain and *infallible way, never to want*. That *Withholding from the poor, brings a man to poverty*: that we shall have the *benefit of the poors prayers*, and their *loyns shall bless us*. That it is the best *way to obtain Gods blessing upon our persons*, whereby

we ſhall *be kept in perpetual ſafety, and delivered from the malicious practices of all our enemies.* That *God will hear us,* and *ſend us ſuccour in all times of need,* as we hear and pitty the poor, and even *make our beds* when we are *ſick.* That what we have this way diſtributed, ſhall *ſtand us in more ſtead* at the *hour of death* and *Day of judgment,* then all the wealth in the world. That the merciful man ſhall be *rewarded with illumination,* and *converſion*; That theſe works of mercy, will bring great *joy* and *peace,* confirm our *hope,* and *ſweeten* all our *afflictions.* That they are evident *ſignes of ſaving graces*; and aſſure us of our future reward, and fruition of *Gods* preſence hereafter. That it is the onely way to *an honourable, and honeſt repute and report, living and dead,* procuring *all love* and *reſpect, from good and bad.* That *God* will bleſs the merciful man *with an happy match,* and a *godly off-ſpring.* That *what we give ſhall be paid again,* unto our *children* and *poſterity*; with an *addition of all other bleſſings*: who otherwiſe ſhall not proſper, but be *vagabonds and beg their bread.* That it is a thing ſo pleaſing to *God,* that he accounts *what is given to them,* as *lent to him.* And ſo acceptable to *Chriſt,* (by reaſon of the near union between him, the poor and us, being but one *myſticall body,* whereof he is the *head*) that what we give *to them, his members,* he takes as *done to himſelf,* and will accordingly reward it, or plague the neglect thereof both upon *us,* and *ours, here*; and upon our *bodies* and *ſouls hereafter.* That what we *diſburſe in this world,* we ſhall *receive* again by bill of exchange *in Heaven.* That it is not ſo much *given,* as *laid up*; in ſo much that we may ſay truly, *what we gave, that we have.* That beſides all this, *God* hath promiſed to reward a little money, meat and cloaths with an infinite, and an *eternal Kingdom of Glory.* That the poor have as true a right to it, as we have to the reſidue. That it is a moſt incomparable *favour to the rich, that there are poor to accept of their charity.* That we are no leſs *beholding to the poor,* then *they are to us.* That we, were it our caſe, would think the contrary very unequal. That they ſhall thereby be the better able to ſerve *God* in their ſeveral ſtations. That they ſhall have cauſe to pray for, and praiſe *God* for us. That it will ſtop our enemies

mouths,

mouths, and make them think the better of our *Religion*, and poſſibly win them to imbrace the truth. At leaſt *ſeeing our good works, they will glorifie our Father which is in Heaven*, with many the like, which might be added for our encouragement. Which did men in the leaſt conſider, they would neither *ſpend* ſo *exceſſively*, nor *heap up* wealth ſo *unmeaſurably* as they doe, when millions of their poor brethren, (for whom *God* would become man, and dy to redeem.) are *in ſuch want*, that *I want words to expreſs it.*

CHAP. V.

BUt the *belly* hath no *ears*, and ſenſual *men, eſpecially the covetous are like* thoſe *Greeks of Conſtantinople*, who had ſtore of Wealth; but becauſe they would ſpare none to the reparation of the Walls, and maintenance of the Souldiers, they loſt all to the *Turks*, which afterwards no money could recover. Or to the Inhabitants *of Hedelburough*, which was loſt through the *Citizens Covetouſneſs*; for being full of Gold and Silver, they would not pay the Souldiers that ſhould have defended them. And what will be their caſe another day? but this, The *fooliſh Virgins to ſave*, or ſpare *a ſhilling or two* brought *no oyl*, but when their *lamps were out*, and the *Bridegroom was come*; what would they have given? yea, *what would they not have given for a little oyle? and for entrance with the wiſe, into the wedding?* Me thinks I could *pitty* theſe men, whom the world ſo adores? even with *tears of blood*, when I ſeriouſly conſider their *latter ends.*

Nevertheleſſe, I am not without hope to prevail with ſome of the moſt covetous; to become liberal, (at leaſt if they either have wit, or do really and indeed *deſire wealth*) by a little enlarging, upon what *God* hath promiſed, touching the increaſe of mens eſtates, by disburſing this way? in which let me crave your attention. What ſaith *our Saviour? Give, and it ſhall be given unto you, good meaſure, preſſed down, and ſhaken together, and running over, ſhall be given into your boſom*, Luke 6.38. *Math* 7.2. *Mar.*4.24. *The liberal perſon ſhall have plenty, and he that watereth ſhall alſo have rain*, Pro. 11.

1.25. *Wealth and riches, ſhall be in the houſe of him, that hath compaſſion of, and giveth to the poor, Pſal.*112.3, to 10. See here how *bounty*, is *the* beſt and *ſureſt way to plenty*. But notable to this purpoſe is that, *Pro*28.27. *He that giveth to the poor, ſhall not lack*. Yea, ſays *Job*, *in the dayes of famine he ſhall have enough, Job* 5.20. A rare, and incomparable priveledg, never to want! and yet this is *a bargain of Gods own making*. Plenty ſhall furniſh the table, where charity takes away, and gives to the poor. *He hath diſperſed abroad*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, *and given to the poor: his benevolence remaineth for ever, Pſa.*112.9. He hath alwaies to give, that hath a free and bountiful heart to give, ſaith *Bernard*. And of this the *Prophet Iſaiah* does aſſure us, *The liberal man, ſaith he, deviſeth liberal things, and by liberality he ſhall ſtand, Iſa.*32.8. A man would think he ſhould rather fall, by being ſo liberal and bountiful; but this is the right courſe to thrive, and hold out. And what ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*? *He is gracious, and full of compaſſion; he ſheweth favour and lendeth, he hath given to the poor*, &c. But what ſhall be his reward? *Wealth and riches ſhall be in his houſe, he ſhall not be moved for ever, his righteouſneſs ſhall endure for ever. He ſ all be in everlaſting remembrance, he ſhall not be afraid of evil tidings, his horne ſhall be exalted with honour. All grace ſhall abound towards him, that he alwaies having alſufficiency in all things, may abound in every good work, and hold out to the end. He draws out his ſoul to the hungry, and comforteth the afflicted: therefore his light ſhall ariſe in obſcurity, and his darkneſs ſhall be as the noon day, and the Lord ſhall guide him continually, and ſatisfie his ſoul in drout, and make fat his bones, He ſhall be like a watered garden, and like a ſpring of waters, whoſe waters faile not. And they that ſhall be of him, ſhall build the old waſt places, he ſhall raiſe up the foundations of many generations, and he ſhall be called the repairer of the breach, and the reſtorer of paths to dwell in, Pſal.*112.1, to 10. *Iſa.* 58.6, to 13. O what rare and pretious promiſes of all ſorts, to us and ours are theſe? if we be merciful, and compaſſionate to the poor. Nor was it ever known that *God* ſuffered a merciful and bountiful man to want; *ordering his affairs with diſcretion*; as the *Pſalmiſt* ſhews, *Pſa.*112.5. But this is not all,

for

for what ſaith the *wiſe man*? *Pro.* 3. *Honour the Lord with thy ſubſtance, and with the firſt fruits of all thine encreaſe, ſo ſhall thy barns be filled with abundance, and thy preſſes ſhall burſt with new wine, ver.* 9, 10. In which regard, it may be likened to *gold, the beſt of mettals*: of which experience teacheth, that *the third part of a grain*, will *guild a wyre of* 134 *foot long*. Or rather to the *Widows handful of meale, and cruſe of oyle*: Or thoſe *loaves and fiſhes in the Goſpel*; for as they did *increaſe and multiply*, even while they were *diſtributing*: ſo do our riches, (and indeed all other gifts) even out of that which the hand reacheth to the mouth, it ſelf is *nouriſhed*. Nor is there a better way to *preſerve your dow*, then *by parting with your cake*. *Charity* is *ſeed*, and the *Husbandman* doth not grow rich by the *ſaving of his ſeed, but by ſowing his ſeed*. Giving to the poor, is like *powring a pail of water into a pump*: that fetcheth up much more then was put in. As it was the uſual ſaying of a merciful man; *the more I give, the more I have*. For as it fared with the *widow of Sarepta*, whoſe *handfull of meale*, and *cruce of oyle* with which ſhe relieved the *Prophet*: *the more ſhe ſpent, the more it increaſed, and the more ſhe had*: ſo ſhall this *pretious oyl*, beſtowed on the poor for *Chriſts* ſake, be returned upon your heads in great meaſure. As ſome that I could name can teſtifie out of admirable experience, and others ſhould find, would they but ſo far forth believe the *Lord* as to try him. Which makes *St. Auſtin* ſay, That *the charitable man is the greateſt uſurer* in the world. And *St. Chryſoſtom*, that *the gainfulleſt Art* is *Alms-giving*.

And thus you ſee, that if either *Old or New Teſtament* be true: there is not a more compendious way to thrive, and grow rich, then by being bountiful to the poor; That not getting but giving, is the true and ready way to abundance: that to *give* in this caſe, is the way to *have*: that parſemony is no good husbandry. According to that of the *wiſe man*, *Pro.* 11. *There is that ſcattereth, and is more increaſed: but he that ſpareth more then is right, ſhall ſurely come to poverty, ver.* 24. And it is but juſt if *God* deny thee thy dayly bread, if thou denieſt him the crumbs. Which being ſo, It ſhould methinks make *rich men* of all others, put the ſame in practiſe, ſince they

re *all for gain*, and looking after commodity; all for treasuring up, *all for themselves*, all for riches, it being their only *summum bonum*; For no such way to encrease their Estates, or benefit themselves, can ever be found out; this will doe it above what they are able any other way, or what they were ever yet acquainted with: How then should it take with them? How should it not whet them on, and make them put the same in practise? For should you rich men plot and break your brains to study and contrive all the dayes of your lives, how you may do your selves the greatest good, this is the onely way.

CHAP. VI.

I Know there is *no perswading men of the world*, that giving away their goods, is the way to encrease them: yea, will the miser say, you must make me a fool, before I can believe it; and therein speak more truly then he is aware of. For *he that will be wise*, (saith *St. Paul*) *let him become a fool, that he may be wise*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 18. Because *the wisdom of the world is foolishness with God, and the wisdom of God foolishness with the world*, 1 *Cor.* 2. 14. and 3. 19. To carnal reason it is as unlikely a thing, as that which *Elisha* told to the *King of Israel*, 2 *Kings* 7. That as the *Famine* was so great in *Samaria* one day, that *mothers were forced to eat their own children*: yet the next day there should be such plenty, that *a measure of fine flower should be sould for a shekle, and two measures of barly for a shekle*. As unlikely as that *Abraham* should have *a Son*, being *almost an hundred years old*, and *Sarah past child-bearing*. As impossible as that *Lazarus* should again *live*, after he was stark *dead, buried* and *stanck* again. Yet as unlikely and impossible as they seemed to be; yet they all came to pass, and *God* did not break his promise, nor disappoint the hopes of such, as had the wit and grace to confide in him. No more will he in this case, which is by far the easier to be performed. And what though carnall minds, (like that *Noble man*, who was *troden to death in the gate of Samaria* for his incredulity) will not believe: yet truth is truth, as well when it is not acknowledged, as when it is.

And I wiſh men would take heed of unbelief, and giving *God* the lye: for as there is nothing he ſo abhors, as that his own houſhold ſervants ſhould not dare to truſt him, as we may ſee in that example of the *Noble man*, 2 *Kings* 7.17,20. and likewiſe in thoſe *Iſraelites*, *Pſa.* 78. when they ſaid, *Can God furniſh a Table in the wilderneſs, He ſmote the Rock that the waters guſhed out, and the ſtreams overflowed; but can he give bread alſo? Can he provide fleſh for his people?* yes he could and did it, to their ſmall comfort that made the exception. For *becauſe they believed not in God, and truſted not in his ſalvation the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and conſumed them. He gave them fleſh, even quails in his wrath, untill they were choaked* *Pſa.* 78. 10, to 38. and *Numb.* 11. 33,34. But admit that *God* ſhould not anſwer thy greedy deſire, in multiplying thy eſtate: yet if he do that which is better for thee, viz. give thee a competency, together with a more contented mind then now thou haſt, or ever wouldſt have, (were thou as *rich as Craſſus*, would it be ever the worſe? or hadſt thou any cauſe to complain? no, but greatly to rejoyce.

Wherefore *truſt God with Abraham, who above hope, believed under hope*, *Rom.* 4.18, to 22. For *faith is to God*, (*as Bathſheba was to Solomon*) ſo in favour, that the *King* will deny her nothing that is good. And thus it appears that giving to the poor, is the moſt ſure and infallible way to encreaſe, and multiply a mans outward eſtate.

CHAP. VII.

But this is not all, for if we but *ſow the ſeeds* of our beneficence, we ſhall not only *reap an earthly crop of ſpiritual and temporal bleſſings*, even *an hundred for one here*: but alſo a *heavenly harveſt*, of everlaſting bleſſedneſs *in the life to come* as the *holy Ghoſt plainly ſets it down*: And we cannot have a *better debtor then our Maker*, nor a *better bond then the Bible* *Prov.* 19.17. *Luke* 6.35. So that *God* does not pay or recompence us, as we doe our creditors: For as *Auguſtine* well notes; what we receive, by way of *return*, *is not ten for a hundred, or an hundred for ten, but an hundred for one*, yea, a thouſand

thouſand thouſand for one; an hundred for one here in this *world*, and *in the world to come life everlaſting*, together with a *Kingdom*, even an immortal, and an eternal *Kingdom of glory* and happines in *heaven*, which is not to be valued with ten thouſand worlds. Where note but the incomparable, and infinite *difference*, between the *receit*, & the *return*. Yea, admire the love and bounty of *God*, and bleſs his name; who for the performance of ſo ſmall a work, hath propoſed ſo great a reward: and for the obtaining of ſuch an happy eſtate, hath impoſed ſuch an eaſie taske. Here is a *Kingdom*, even the *Kingdom of Heaven*; in recompence of a little meat, drink and apparrell: who then that is in his right ſenſes, would not turn all his ſcraping into giving, yea, what can we think too much, what not too little to give, to attain eternity, for this *incorruptible Crown of Glory*? 1 *Pet.* 5.4. for this *Kingdom*, *where are ſuch joys, as eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard; neither hath entred into the heart of man to conceive*, 1 *Cor.* 2.9. A place where ſhall be *no evil preſent, nor good abſent*, *Matth* 6.20. In compariſon whereof, all the *Thrones* and *Kingdoms* upon earth are leſs then *the drop of a bucket*, *Iſa.* 40.15. and 66.1. O the *unmeaſurable meaſure of our Saviours bounty*! and how happy is that man, that may become *a creditour to his Saviour*! *heaven* and *earth* ſhall be *empty*, before he ſhall want a royal *payment*.

Wherefore hearken to this, all you ſelf-lovers, that are only for your own ends: Do you indeed love your *ſelves*? and your *ſouls*? would you be *rich* indeed, and that both *here* and *hereafter*? then be charitable to the poor, even to the utmoſt of your ability: for this *giving* is not only *an act of charity*, but alſo *of Chriſtian policy*: ſince we ſhal not only receive our own again, but the ſame alſo with great increaſe. And certainly he that is ſo wiſe, as to believe what *God* ſpeaks: will be more covetous to *lay out*, then to *lay up*. Yea, one would think the more covetous men are, and the more they love their money, the more liberal and bountiful this ſhould make them. For it is enough to raviſh any *Chriſtian ſoul*, and to make him to ſtretch out his eſtate upon the tenters, that he may be the more liberal, in relieving *Chriſts poor members*; *for the greater the liberality, the greater the recompence of reward*, *Phil.* 4.17,18.

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The Lord is content to *acknowledge himself the charitable man's debtor.* Yea, by our liberality to the poor, *our most gracious Redeemer*, acknowledgeth himself *gratified and engaged*; as himself does most freely and fully acknowledge, *Matth.25. was an hungry and ye gave me meat, &c.* And *for as much as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me*, Vers.35.36,40. *The poor mans hand, is Christs Treasury or Bank*; as one fitly calls it, and by putting thereinto, man becomes a *Creditor* to his *Saviour.*

Our *Blessed Saviour*, speaking of the poor: tells us, *He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me. And* that *whosoever shall give unto one of these little ones to drinke, a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward, Matth.* 10.40,41,42. Briefly, for conclusion of this point, let this be *the use:* when the poor at your gates ask their daily bread they highly honour you, yea, after a sort they make you Gods: therefore by your bounty and liberality, shew yourselves at least to be *Christians*, to be *men.* And certainly, in *receiving of Christs poor members*; *we receive Christ himself* in them: we may think it an incomparable favour, that we have the offer of such guests, to accept of our charity, and wherewithall to relieve and entertain them. And accordingly be thankfull, saying in effect as *Zerxes* the *Persian Monarch* said, when *Themistocles* came to him, being banished his own Country; *Let the* Athenians *send us more of such guests.*

A man treasures up no more of his riches, then what he contributes in alms. The *Fool in the Gospel* filled *his barns*, in filling of the *poors bellies* he had done more wisely. I confess this is a point of Doctrine, that the world will not receive, let *God* say what he will: but godly *Chrysostome* both affirms and proves, that the *rich* are more beholding to the *poor*, then the *poor* are to the *rich*: the poor receive only a single alms, even trash and trifles in comparison; the rich have returned them more then millions of worlds are worth, *Mat.*5.7.& 25 34. *Luke* 16.9. Why say we then, we give to the poor, when it may more truly be said, that we give unto our selves rather then to them, *Dan.*4.27. *Pro.*11.24. Why then should we think

the poor ſo much beholding, and ſo mightily bound unto us, for our ſcraps and ſuperfluous reliques? Or that we doe ſuch a meritorious buſineſs, when we largely relieve them: and not rather think our ſelves beholding to them, and to *God* for them: ſeeing they are the occaſions of ſuch ineſtimable gain, for ſuch trifling diſburſements, as *St. Auſtin* ſpeaks. Yea, ſaith he, we are more happy that there are poor upon whom we may exerciſe our charity, then they are that there are rich who doe relieve their wants; though with never ſo great ſupply. And indeed if there were not ſome to receive thine alms, thou couldſt not give earth, and receive heaven. Wherefore give thanks to *God*, who hath given thee means, by ſuch a ſmall price, to procure a thing ſo precious.

Beſides we may boldly aver, with *Chryſoſtom*; *That without poverty riches would be unprofitable*: As conſider that if with *Adam* and *Eve*, we had a whole world, but no body to make ready proviſion and to attend upon us, nor do any thing for us; what joy could great men take of their riches, if there were not poor men to do mean offices for them, what low imploiments ſhould the higheſt be forced to deſcend unto, if there were no inferiours to perform them? How then ſhould not a conſiderate man love and be liberal to them? and exceedingly bleſs *God* for them, and not do as do the moſt, *ſcorne them, and not think them worthy a familiar word or a courteous look*.

And certainly, he wants both grace and wit, who does not admire the bounty and goodneſs of *God*, in that he hath offered us the opportunity of ſuch ſowing, ſuch reaping, yea, O Lord what are we? that thou ſhouldſt give us plenty of all things here alſo, which unto them thou haſt denied: ſo that every way *it is* (as our *Saviour* tels us) *a more bleſſed thing to give then to receive*, (which the *Apoſtle* would have us to remember, *Acts* 20.34,35.) Yet no reaſon can we alleadge on our behalf, but *O the depth!* Rom. 11.33. Wherefore do thou O my *God and Redeemer* inlarge my heart with thankfulneſs, and implant this grace in my heart, O make me liberall of my mony, as thou waſt of thy blood. O let me have an heart to give Food and Rayment to thoſe, for whom thou gaveſt thy ſelf a ranſome. Yea, of all other graces, inlarge my

heart with *Chriſtian Charity* and compaſſion: ſince it is *a grac ſo univerſally profitable*, and withall ſo *amiable*. As O th *loveline ſs* and profitableneſs of this *Chriſtian grace!* For to d good to the poor, is more then a treble good: it pleaſures them moſt of all *pleaſures the doer*: for it *brings bleſſings upon thei Souls, Bodies, Eſtates, Names, Poſterity*, it increaſeth their re ward, cauſes the poor to pray for, and praiſe *God* for us, an alſo others to glorifie him; *it is an odour that ſmelleth ſweet, ſacrifice acceptable and pleaſant to God; who will fulfill all our n ceſſities, through his riches with glory in Jeſus Chriſt*, as th *Apoſtle* delivers it, *Phil.*4.16, to 20. Whence that gre praiſe of it, 1 *Cor.*13.13. *Now abides Faith, Hope, and Ch rity, but the chiefeſt of theſe is Charity.*

CHAP. VIII.

AND ſo much of the neceſſity, commodity and profitabl neſs of this Chriſtian duty. If you would know who a to give, I anſwer all, that have any thing of their own ſpare. For we are to give that which is our own, and wh we have a proper right unto. *Children ought not to give their parents goods, nor ſervants of their Maſters, without the conſent*, for this is *robbery*, and *not charity*. All I ſay, if th have any thing of their own to give: even thoſe who are mean eſtate, are bound to perform this Chriſtian duty. As a pears by the *poor Widow of Sareptas* relieving the *Prophe* And the *poor widow*, (ſo much commended by our *Saviou* for *caſting in her two mites into the treaſury*, *Marke* 12. where was a very *little mony*, but *a great deal of charity*, *St. Auſtin* hath it. And the *Macedonians*, who being the ſelves poor, gave even above their ability to the relief of th that were poorer, 2 *Cor.*8.2. And in the *Apoſtles*, *Acts* 3 and in our *Saviour Chriſt* himſelf, who though he were ſo po that he lived upon what others out of their love and duty niſtred unto him; as appears Luke 8.3. yet he himſelf g alms, to thoſe who were in greater want; as we may gat by *John* 12.6,8. Again, *John Baptiſt* requireth, that *th that have two coats, ſhould part with one, and* that *they who h meat ſhould doe likewiſe*: that is in caſes of great neceſſity. A our *Saviour* commandeth us, to *give alms of ſuch things a*

have, be they more or leſs, better or worſe, *Luke* 11.41. And in caſe we have nothing to ſpare out of our aboundance, we muſt ſell that we have and give alms, if there be extream neceſſity, rather then let any periſh for want of our ſupply. And if we have nothing to ſell, *we muſt work with our own hands; that we may have to give unto them that need*, *Ephe.*4.28. Give we muſt, according to our ability; *be it but a cup of cold water*, *Mat.* 10.42. (For *if there be but firſt a willing mind, liberality is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not*, 2 *Cor.*8.12.

Many will alleadge, and think alſo that this plea will excuſe them: they are mean men, and have not ability to perform theſe works of mercy. To theſe I anſwer, haſt thou ability for unneceſſary expenſes? as drinking, feaſting, recreations, &c. For he only is liberal, according to his ability, that beſtowes no leſs in works of mercy, then he does in ſuperfluous and needleſs expenſes, and kindneſs to friends; that reſembles the *Theſſalonians* who where forward according to their ability, and rather beyond it. Or the *Macedonians*, who not only to their power, but beyond their power, were willing, and *prayed the Apoſtles with great inſtance, that they would receive the grace and fellowſhip of the miniſtring which was towards the ſaints*, 2 *Cor.*8.2, to 6.

But *principally*, and eſpecially, this duty belongeth unto *rich men*: *Charge them that are rich in this world; that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate*, 1 *Tim.*6.17,18. *Rich men* like *full Ciſterns* ſhould let go the *cock* of their bounty, to the relieving of the *thirſty*. As they are *rich*, ſo they are commanded to be *rich in good works*. The more *God* hath beſtowed upon thee, the greater is thy *debt of thankfulneſs*, and the greater thy *due of obedience*. None are ſo bound to be *rich in good works*, as thoſe that are *rich in the goods of this world*. For God *hath given them all ſufficiency in all things, that they may abound to every good work*. The thicker and greater the *clouds* be, the more *rain* deſcends from them: And *to whomſoever much is given, of him ſhall be much required*. *God* doth not require *much*, where *little* is *beſtowed*: nor will he accept of *little*, where *much* is *received*. And fit it is that they who *hold the largeſt Farms*, ſhould *pay the greateſt rents*; though the contrary is commonly ſeen: For they from *God* hath made moſt *fruitfull in their eſtates*, are moſt *barren in good works*. Nay inſtead of *giving to*, and *praying for the poor*: they will *make prey of them*. As how many *birds* have been *diſplumed*, that their *wings* and *neſts* might be richly *feathered*. It were well if *juſtice* would *squeez* theſe *ſponges*; and leave them as *dry at the laſt*, as they where *at firſt*.

Our *bleſſed Saviour* tells us, *Matth.*10. *He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that ſent me*, ver. 40, 41, 42. for all that; let *Chriſt* in his poor *members* come to rich men in theſe days, and demand a ſmall matter of them: he ſhall find as cold entertainment, as *David* did from *Nabal*. In reaſon, we may well afford *our ſuperfluities*; where we owe *our ſelves, and all* that *we have* or hold. And that how much we receive *more bleſſings* then others, we ſhould be *more thankfull* then others; but it ſeldom proves ſo. Every man is commanded to *give according as God hath bleſſed him*, *Deut.*16.17. and ſo in 1 *Cor.*16.2. And

a man would think, that upon whom *God* bestoweth most of his *outward blessings*, of them he should receive the greatest *inward thanks*: but the truth is, pride and forgetfulness, is commonly all the return men make to *God*, for his blessings. *Jer.*22.21. *Job* 22.17,18. *Psal.*10.4,5,6. *Deut.* 32.15,18. Many receive abundance of these outward blessings from *God*; yet are not so thankfull, as they who have received but from hand to mouth. And no duty more neglected, Insomuch that I can never enough *admire*, *the little charity* of most rich men in these daies. Or indeed *pity their simplicity*: Nor were it possible they should be so close fisted, if they were not *as barren of wit as* they *abound in wealth*. For were they so wise as to consider, the many reasons and inducements that propound themselves, to provoke men to this duty: I doubt not but they would *doe good to others*, if it were but *to doe a greater good to themselves*. For of all other graces, the grace of charity and bounty, hath the *most and primest promises* of reward, *to us and ours*, both *here and hereafter* annexed unto it.

CHAP. IX.

But from the *parties of whom*, come we to the *persons to whom* this duty must be performed, and they are the poor and needy, that are in greatest necessity; and especially such as are most honest, and religious. And such as are *poor through necessity*, and not of choise. And rather to those *that work and beg not*, then to those *that beg and work not*. For according to the *Apostles rule*, *they that will not labour should not eat*. *Affected poverty* is odious, that which is *of Gods making* justly challengeth our relief, a poverty of our own making deserves no pitty, and he that *sustains the lewd*, *maintains* and feeds not his body, but his lust.

Again one would think, that *full breasts* should *milk themselves* without drawing; and that *large Springs*, should *issue forth* their *waters* without *pumping*. Your charity should *seek out the poor*, before the poor *seek* for *your charity*.

But what will many *Rich men say*, we know none in such want, and think also they speak reason: for if you observe it, this shall be *their plea* hereafter, when they shall be *arrayned at the barr of Gods justice*: They will even answer *Christ*, *Lord when saw we thee an hungry or naked? Matth.*25.44. They know not that there are *out parishes* so oppresst with poor, that the Inhabitants are not able (were they willing) to maintain a tithe of them. They know not what a number of their brethren, there are in *slavish captivity under the Turkes*; in such lamentable and sad condition, as if they were already half in Hell; who might with ease be ransomed, would rich men hearken to the grievous mones of their wives, and parents that would daily come to solicite them in their behalf, had they any hope to speed. They know not that there are thousands of poor folks children, would be bred up at least be taught to read, and placed forth: who are brought up and fitted for the *gallowes* only, and for *hell*. They know none of all this, nor will they enquire nor come where they might see, and inform themselves, *Luk* 9.23. But this will not be sufficient, to keep them from being bid *Depart ye cursed into everlasting fire*, *Matth.*25.41. Alas if thou didst desire to hear, at least if thou wer't known to be a mercifull man, and not taken pe-

tice of for a *Churlish Nabal*: thou wouldest daily have such objects of charity propounded to thee, as might justly move thee, to deprive thy self some necessaries for their relief, were not thy *heart of stone*, and thy *bowells of brass*. I profess it amazes me! that such mens consciences will permit them a minutes rest: Nor doe I wonder at any thing more! then at the seeming comfort, and peace of conscience that some men have. I mean Rich men that are either all for hoarding, or all for pride, lust, and all kind of excess; while they see and hear of so many, that are in so great extremity and want, As they cannot choose but hear sad stories, of the great extremity of many. Nor would it be any disparagement to your greatness; if you went or sent your servant into those back lanes, and blind corners which swarme with poor, and there find out the most indigent of them: and thus *they* doe amongst the very Turks. For they are accustomed to send their servants abroad, purposely to hearken among their neighbours, which of them have most need of victualls, money, raiment, &c. and it is said that the *Jews*, give to their poor not mouldy scraps, that their servants scorn to eat as we use to do; but the best of what they have, because *God* is to have the best, and what is given to the poor for *Gods* sake, is given to *God*. It is to be feared, that both *Turks* and *Jews* will one day rise up in judgment, against the most of us *Christians*: For how small is the number of those among us, that will thus doe! and yet how many are there, that *labour hard and cannot get cloaths* to put on, nor *bread* to eat; that have *rags for their raiment*, and scarce *straw to ly upon*. That *drink water*, and *live on wort leaves*, or pulse: yea, on *grains like a hog* or *scraps like a dog*. Yea, if we did but go into some such places: how many *Children* should we hear *crying* for hunger, the *parents out-crying them*, because they have no food to give them: some *lying in straw* for want of beds, others *drinking water* for want of better drink, another sort near *starved with hunger* for want of victuals; or escaping that, *quaking* and shivering *with cold* for lack of fire.

And most meet it is, that a wise choise should be made: for as *to deny* those that are *unable* to help themselves, is to *starve the Bees*; so *to give* to those that are *idle* and *vicious*, is to *support the Drones*. Though better it is to *favour a bastard*, then to *murther a child*. *God* looks not so much on the *merits of the begger*, as upon the *mercy of the giver*.

Our Saviours words are, *when thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not the rich but the poor to thy table*, but we *feast the rich*, and *starve the poor*; we turn the alms we should give to the poor, into feasts for the Rich. Never more sumptuous in cloathing our selves, never less care for others. Pride cuts, and riot shuffles; but betwixt them both, they deal the poor but a bad game. Only the rich in faith, will hearken to what *Christ* saith.

Then touching *what* we are to give, and this both for *the quantity* and *the quallity* of our alms. We must give that which is *worth giving*, we must *give* to the poor *things wholsome*, *cleanly*, *convenient*, and *comfortable* for the sustentation of their lives. For as many of *Christs* poor members, are so neglected that many a *dog* is better provided for then they are. As *Parishes allow their poor*, perhaps *four pence* a week for *house rent*, *a penny a*

week for apparrell, and *houſehold ſtuff*, *a penny a week for waſhing*, *a penny a week for firing*, *a penny a week for meat and drink*; an allowance able to make their skin cleave to their bones! or make a mans hair ſtand an end that ſhall hear of it! If our ſelves were confined to this allowance, how ſhould we think our ſelves wronged, and cruelly dealt withall! And yet if they cry to *Church Wardens*, or *Collectors* for what is allowed them, (if they could alwaies have it duly paid) they muſt ſo *crouch* and *creep*, and be ſo *checkt and controwled*; that it would make the humbleſt of them, ſcorn to accept of it; did not hunger ſo pinch them, that they are compelled whether they will or no, not daring to anger their good maſters, for fear of being cut ſhort of that little. Then beg or ſteal they muſt, except they will ſtarve: but how is their caſe mended thereby, many will give unto them ſuch baſe and ſluttiſh food, as were fit only for dogs. As it is the *uncharitable charity* of thouſands, to give nothing to the poor but what they can no way make uſe of themſelvs; *the mouldineſs gives their bread*, *the fly gives their meat*, *the moth gives their garments*. But will *Chriſt* accept of this for his poor members, who are one with him? *Heb.*2.11. 1 *Cor.*12.12. yea, he is hungry and naked in his members, *Matth.*25.42,43. If we neglect them, we neglect him; if we give them, we give him. *Iſa.* 63. 9. *Matth.*10.40. But doſt thou think them *children of the ſame Father*? yea, *members of the ſame body* of which *Chriſt* is the *head*? and *partakers in hope*, of the ſame pretious promiſes with thy ſelf. Or will not *Chriſt* ſcorne ſuch thy baſe refuſe, ſwill and ſwines meat? who hath given himſelf unto us, and vouchſafeth to nouriſh our ſouls and bodies, with his moſt pretious body and blood. O conſider this, you that ſo baſely eſteem of the poor! leaſt you curſe your own folly, when it will be too late to wiſh, I would I had not.

CHAP. X.

MAny other heads and particulars I ſhould inſiſt upon; but they would overmuch ſwell the heap, and perhaps tire the *Reader*; wherefore only a few other ſhort motives, or conſiderations, and I ſhall conclude.

Firſt, all you have is *derived from God*, and therefore great reaſon ſomething of what you have, be *returned to God* again; and that in ſome proportion. And untill we conſider, how infinitely good *God* hath been unto us: we can never ſhew any goodneſs to our brethren. We muſt know *God* hath given us all we have; before we will part with any thing for his ſake. Beſides what can be more equal and juſt? then to give a little unto him, who hath given all unto us? eſpecially ſeeing he hath granted unto us, the uſe only of what we poſſeſs, reſerving ſtill the chief propriety unto himſelf. And to ſpare ſome thing to the poor, out of our abundance at his requeſt; who hath not ſpared to give unto us, his only begotten and dearly beloved Son; that by a ſhamefull death, he might free us from everlaſting death and condemnation; and purchaſe for us eternall happineſs!

Yea, Secondly, in the next place, what madneſs is it to deny, being requeſted, to give at his appointment ſome ſmall portion of our goods? who by his own right and authority may take all. And what ſenſeleſs folly were it to turn away our face from him, when he asketh in the behalf of the poor, ſome earthly and momentany trifles, from whom we expect

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his free gift, *Heavens felicity*, and *everlasting glory*.

Thirdly, by it we may know our ſelves to be the children of *God*, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. Yea, and others may alſo know it, *John* 13.34,35. And hereby *we know the unmercifull to be none of Gods children*: for the *Father* of *Mercies* hath no *children* but the *merciful*, *Matth.* 5.7.

Fourthly, there cannot be a truer argument of a godleſs perſon, then unmercifulneſs: If we know a man *unmerciful*, we may boldly ſay he is *ungodly*. *James* 2.13,17. and 3.17. The *lack of charity*, is the *conviction of hypocriſie*, 1 Cor. 13. 1,2,&c. *The righteous is merciful and giveth*, *Pſa.* 37.21,22.

Fifthly, He that is not a *feeling-Member* of others miſeries, is not of that *Myſtical Body*, whereof *Chriſt is the Head*. It is not who is called a *Chriſtian*, or who is *baptized*, but he that partakes of the divine nature, believes in Chriſt, and declares his faith by the fruits thereof. Then

Sixthly, It is impoſſible, that he ſhould have faith in the promiſes, that is unmercifull. And indeed nothing but the *aſſurance of heavenly things*, makes us willing to *part with earthly things*. Neither can he contemn *this life*, that knows not *a better*.

Seventhly, How can he ever love *Chriſt* himſelf, that loves not his poor members? men indeed will ſay they love *God*, and perhaps think ſo too: but let them ſay what they will, if unmercifull, I will never believe againſt Scripture, that they *love God whom they have not ſeen*: *that love not their brother whom they have ſeen*; *if we love him, we will love one another*, 1 *John* 4.10,21. *If any man* (ſaies the *Apoſtle*) *have theſe worlds goods, and ſeeth his Brother have need, and ſhutteth up his bowels of compaſſion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* *John* 3.17. The *river of charity*, does alwaies *ſpring* from the *fountain of piety*. Faith is as *the leads*, and *pipes, to bring in*: and *Love*, is as *the cock of the conduit, to let out*. And what availeth the one without the other? *What availeth it, my Brethren*, (ſaies St. *James*) *though a man, ſaith he, hath faith, when he hath no works*, (that is, works of Charity) *can the faith ſave him?* *For if a Brother, or a Siſter be naked, and deſtitute of daily food, and one of you ſay unto them, Depart in peace, warm your ſelves, and fill your bellies; notwithſtanding ye give them not thoſe things, which are needful for the body: what helpeth it? Even ſo the faith, if it have no works, is dead in it ſelf*, James 2.14, to 18. *A juſt man lives by his faith*, Hab.2.4. Heb.10.38. and *others live by his charity*. *Pure Religion, and undefiled before God, even the Father, is this: to viſit the Fatherleſs and widowes in their adverſity, and to keep himſelf unſpotted of the world*, James 1.27. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13.10. and *Faith is the fulfilling of the Goſpel*, Act.13.39. and 16.31. 1 Theſ.4.14. 1 John 3.23. *A Chriſtian* in reſpect of his *faith*, *is Lord over all*, 1 John 5.4. and 2.14. in reſpect of his *love*, he is *ſervant unto all*, Gal.5.13. *Faith* is the *mother grace*: *by it we are juſtified*, Luke 7.47, 50. Gal.3.8. *our hearts are purified*, Act.15.9. *our perſons are accepted*, and *our ſouls ſaved*, Ephe.2.8,9. Luke 18.42. Yet in many reſpects, love is preferred before it: as 1 *Cor.*13.13. *Now abideth Faith, Hope, and Love, even theſe three*; *but the chiefeſt of theſe is Love*. So that what the *diamond*

is among *ſtones*, the *Sun* among *Planets*, and *gold* among *mettals*, ſuch is *Love among the graces*. Love will make us to have publique ſpirits, reſembling *the Moon*, which *borroweth her light* from the *Sun*, that ſhe may *convey it to all the inferiour creatures*; *takes from the Sea*, that ſhe may *give to the leſſer rivers*. So that it manifeſtly proves, that *heaven is none of our Countrey*. If we will *ſend none of our wealth thither* before us. Or rather, that we think *Heaven* nothing worth, when we will not give a little baſe pelfe to compaſs it.

CHAP. XI.

EIghtly, ſay not as ſome churles will doe, is not what I have mine own? and may I not do with mine own as I pleaſe? for this is neither *good law*, nor *good divinity*. Not *good law*, For tis *a rule in Law*, No man may uſe his *own right* to the *Common-wealths wrong*, or damage. The *Law* provides, that a man ſhall *not burn his own corn*, nor his *own houſe*: That he ſhall not *drown his own Land*; nay, a man may not *bind himſelf from marriage*, or the *manuring* or tillage *of his own Land*, becauſe it is againſt the good of the *Common-wealth*. A man may *not kill himſelf*, but he *forfeites all* he hath *to the King*, and deprives himſelf of *Chriſtian buriall*. *Not good divinity*, For *not to give* a conſiderable part, of what *God* hath intruſted us withall to *the poor*; *is to rob them* of their due. But that is not all, for it makes a man *guilty of murther alſo*; as well as theſe: For where as in the *ſixth Commandment*, *God forbiddeth murther*; he no leſs commandeth us to uſe the means, whereby the life of our Neighbour is preſerved, and ſuſtained. In which regard, *St. Ambroſe* doubteth not to ſay, Thou haſt killed the poor, if thou haſt not fed them. *The lamp* is *put out*, as well by *not putting oyl into* it, as by *blowing it out*. In like manner he that can *ſave* his Neighbour *from drowning*, and will not: is a wilful murtherer.

Ninthly, There is no better way to pleaſure our ſelves, then by being mercifull to the poor, as I might plentifully prove. *Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor, the Lord ſhall deliver him in time of trouble. He will keep and preſerve him alive, he ſhall be bleſſed upon the earth, and not be delivered unto the will of his enemies*, *Pſal.*41.1,2,3. *If thou draw out thy ſoul to the hungry, then ſhall thy health ſpring forth ſpeedily*, &c. *Iſa.*58.7,8. But admit the merciful man be long *ſick*; *God will preſerve him alive, ſtrengthen him upon the bed of languiſhing*; yea, *make all his bed in his ſickneſs*. The Lord will ſtir up the feathers under him, *his ſoul ſhall be at eaſe, and his body ſweetly refreſhed. Mercy ſhall be his cordiall, or pillow of repoſe until he be raiſed up again*, *Pſa.*41.1, to 11. and many the like priviledges, Whereof take one *inſtance*: *The widow of Sarepta* was bleſſed with a miraculous *increaſe of her meal and oyl*, with the *preſervation of her Family* in the time of famine, and with the *Reſurrection of her ſon*, *by her relieving the Prophet* in his baniſhment, 1 *Kings* 17. And alſo the *Shunamite*, who had a more full reward, as you may read, 2 *Kings* 4. and 8. *Chapters*. And many the like if I could ſtand to enlarge. Whereas by being unmercifull to the poor, we not only bring the *judgements of God upon our ſelves*, *James* 2. 13. even all manner of miſeries, *Pſa.* 109. 8, to 16. *Job* 20. 19, to 25. and 31. 16. *Amos* 6. 1, 7, 8. *Jeremiah* 5.

28,29. but we *bring plagues upon our posterity* also, *Psal.* 109. *Let his children be continually vaggabonds, and beg; let there be none to extend mercy unto him, neither let there be any to favour his fatherless children. Let his posterity be cut off*, &c. *because he remembered not to shew mercy*, &c. *ver.* 9, to 17. Nor is there a sorer evill under the sun, then to love mony better then our selves. *Eccle.*5.13. *Matth.*25.41,45. *As knowing therefore the terrour of the Lord: we perswade men*: 2 *Cor.*5.11. And *who so is wise, will consider these things*: *Pro.*29.7.

Tenthly and lastly, does our *dear Saviour*, esteem what is done to his poor members, as done to himself; even as the *head* acknowledgeth the benefit done unto it, which the *meanest member* of the *body* receiveth: then in no case omit this duty. And indeed what can be a more *forcible reason to make our hearts relent, though they be never so stony? and our bowels to yearn with pity* and compassion towards the poor; *though they were of brass*, and *iron*, then to consider, that *our dear Lord and Saviour in them doth crave relief*: for who is so more then bruitishly ungrateful, that can turn him away empty handed? *who being infinitely rich in all glory and happiness, was contented for our sakes to become poor, that by his poverty he might communicate unto us his heavenly riches.* Who would not give *Christ* lodging? Yea even (if need should require) the use of his own bed, if he remember, that *Christ* was content so far to abase himself for our sakes, as *to make a stable his chamber, and a manger his lodging, that we might be admitted into his heavenly, and everlasting mansions.* Who would *deny to cloth him* being naked? *who hath cloathed our nakedness, and covered our filthiness with the pretious robe of his righteousness, in which we stand accepted before* God, *and receive the blessing of eternall happiness.* Who would not spare food out of his own belly to relieve poor *Christ*, who hath given unto us his blessed body to be our meat, and his pretious blood to be our drinke, whereby our souls and bodies are nourished unto everlasting life? Who would not leave all pleasure and profit to go and visit him in his sickness and imprisonment, that left heaven, and his Fathers bosome, that he might come to visit and redeem us with the inestimable price of himself? Yea, if wise, we will count it an honour, whereof we are very unworthy. As *most unworthy we are of such an honour as to relieve hungry, thirsty, and naked Christ in his poor members.* Whence the *Macedonians* counted, and called it a favour that they might have their hand in so good a worke, 2 *Cor.*8.1,2,3,4. And that *David thanks God, that of his own he would take an offering*, 1 Chron.29.9. And this is another reason to convince men, that it is most just and equall they should be liberall to the poor members of *Jesus Christ.*

And so much touching the reasons and motives to this Christian duty. Then which, there cannot be *either more, or clearer, or stronger, or weightier inducements, to perswade to any one thing in the world, then* there is *to this, if men have either heart or braine.*

Such as think this Epitomy too brief, may read my *Poors Advocate* in eight parts: with *An infallible way to fare well* in our bodies, names, estates pretious souls and posterities.

Finis.

This Abſtract being ended, and yet much room left; I take leave to fill up the ſheet with the Copy of a Letter, writ to a Factor in Forreign parts: who ill diſcharged the Truſt and Confidence of his Deſerving Maſter.

Kind Sir,

VVEre there no other ground of my writing, this were enough. I have a publique ſpirit, and love to do good offices; though I ſhould purchaſe ill will for my pains. But the lively reſemblance of my ſelf, which I once ſaw in you, your making choice (as I ſuppoſed) of thoſe true riches, that being once had, can never be loſt. And your offering to my view thoſe lines of a rare *Author* (which did not a little pleaſure me) propound themſelves to me, as a great ingagement. Beſides my love too and hopes of you formerly were not greater, then is now my fear. And poſſible it is, I may prove another *Photion* unto you, who when a friend of his would have caſt himſelf away, ſuffered him not ſaying: I was made thy friend to this purpoſe. So you have my Apology; or if you ſhall further aske why I take this pains? turn to *Levit.*19.17. *Heb.*3.13. and you have there both my anſwer and warrant.

You cannot think much, that Mr. *N.* ſhould acquaint me (of all others) with what Monies you have long ought him; and how little conſcience you make of paying thereof.

But that you ſhould ſo uſe ſo good a Maſter; to whom alſo you were once bound by Oath (if you remember) moves wonder in me to aſtoniſhment. *To do unto others, as you would have others do unto you*, is a point agreed upon by all, even *infidels* that expect not another life; nor once dream that they have immortall ſouls. And I need not ask any more, then that you would ask your own conſcience, whether you would be ſo dealt withall? But hear what I ſhall ſpeak to you from the mouth of *God.*

I grant the caſe is common with *Atheiſts*, who believe not that there is a *God*, a *Heaven*, a *Hell*, a *day of judgement*: nor that *every man ſhall be rewarded according to his deeds, be they good or evill.* But that you ſhould manifeſt your ſelf to be ſuch an one, makes me cry out, *O the Depth!*

Good ſir bethink your ſelf, for there is not a more infallible Character of a wicked man, in all the Book of *God. The wicked borroweth, but payeth not again*, Pſal.37.21. As for *a good man he breaks not his promiſe, though he be damnified by the performance*, Pſal.15.4. You cannot be ignorant, that *with what meaſure ye meet to others here, God will meaſure it to you again hereafter*, Mat.7.2. That the *Law of God*, under the penalty of his curſe, *requireth to reſtore whatſoever hath been committed to you in truſt*, Levit.6.2,3. *Numb.*5.6,7,8. Nor that *there is a flying Rowl, a winged curſe for him that gets riches by robbery, and oppreſſion: that ſhall* not only *purſue him*, but even *enter into his houſe, and conſume it with the timber thereof, and the ſtones thereof*, Zach5.3,4. of which I might heap up inſtances. As O the multitude of examples of thoſe, that have miſerably periſhed for their falſe-

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hood and perfidiouſneſs, in betraying the truſt that they have undertaken. And this you may boldly build upon; There is no fruit, but ſhame & death to be gathered from the forbidden Tree, whatſoever *Satan* may ſeem to promiſe.

Nor is it alwaies the lot of thoſe, that care not how they get wealth, to become rich, *Eccle.*9.11. For get men never ſo much, *without Gods bleſſing*; even *all their getting of great wages, is but putting money into a bag with holes*, as the *Prophet Haggai* ſpeaks, *Hag.*1.6. much more *he that getteth riches, and not by right*, Jer.17.11. *Except the Lord build the houſe, they labour in vain that build it. It is in vain to riſe early, and lye down late, and eat the bread of carefulneſs*, Pſal.127.1,2. *Tis only the bleſſing of the Lord, that maketh rich*, Prov.10.22. Yea, have not you found it ſo: I dare ſay, reckon from that very hour, wherein you firſt reſolved to cozen (if ever you ſo reſolved) and you will find, that you never ſince proſpered.

Or in caſe he that reſolves to be evill, making no conſcience how he comes by his riches, ſo he have them; have his hearts deſire: his riches prove but the aggravations of his ſinne, and additions to judgement. For *God* doth not onely withdraw his bleſſing from, but even ſend his curſe with the riches he beſtows; ſo that it becomes their bane. *He gives it them in wrath, and for their hurt: as he did a King, and Quailes to the Iſraelites*; for which ſee *Hoſ.*13.11. *Mal.*2.2. *Pſal.*69.22. *Eccle.*5.13. and 8.11,12. I pray turn to the places, for I cannot ſtand to amplify it.

Nor ſhall he alone fare the worſe; for *God* hath threatned to *bring plagues upon the Children, and childrens children of ſuch an one; unto the fourth generation*, Exod.20.5. and more particularly, that *they ſhall be vagabonds, and beg their bread: ſo that none ſhall extend mercy, or favour unto them*, Pſal.109.7, to 17. *God* will make thoſe Children beggars, for whoſe ſakes the Father hath made many beggers.

Nor is this all, in any degree: For *there is no end of plagues to the wicked man*, Prov.24.20. Without paying or reſtoring (ſo far as a man is able) there is no being ſaved: for as humility is the repentance of pride, abſtinence of ſurfeit, alms of covetouſneſs, love of malice: ſo only reſtitution, is the repentance of injuſtice. And he that dies before reſtitution, dies in his ſinne; and he that dies in his ſinne, cannot be ſaved. And indeed repentance, without reſtitution; is as if a Thief ſhould take away your purſe, ask you pardon, ſay hee's ſorry for it; but keeps it ſtill: in which caſe you would ſay, he did but mock you.

Now *what ſhall it profit a man, to gain the whole world*, if he gain Hell with it; *and looſe* both Heaven, and *his own ſoul*? Mat.16.26. What is it to flouriſh for a time, and periſh for ever?

A man would think, that *Achan* paid dear enough for his goodly *Babiloniſh garment*, the *two hundreth ſhekles of ſilver*, and his *wedg of gold* which he coveted, and took away: when *Hee, his Sonnes, and Daughters; his Oxen, and Aſſes; his Sheep, and Tent; and all that he had, were ſtoned with ſtones, and burnt with fire*: if that was all he ſuffered, *Joſh.*7.18, to 26. But to be caſt into *Hell*, to lye for ever in a bed of quenchleſs *flames*; is a far greater puniſhment. For the Soul of all ſufferings, is the ſufferings of the ſoul; and in reaſon, if *Dives* be *tormented in endleſs flames*, for not giving his own goods

goods to them that needed, *Luke* 16.21,23. *Mat.*25.41,to 43. What ſhall become of him, that takes away other mens? If that *ſervant in the Goſpel, was bound to an everlaſting priſon*, that onely chalenged his own debt; *for that he had not pity on his fellow, as his Maſter had pity on him*: whether ſhall they be caſt, that unjuſtly vex their Neighbours, quarrell for that which is none of theirs, and lay title to another mans propriety? If he *ſhall have judgement without mercy, that ſhews not mercy*, Jam.2.13. What ſhall become of ſubtraction, and Rapine, *Pſal.*109.11. Oh the madneſs of men! that cannot be hired to hold their finger for one minute, in the weak flame of a farthing *Candle*; knowing it ſo intollerable: and yet for trifles, will plunge themſelves body and ſoul, into thoſe endleſs and everlaſting *flames of hell* fire.

If a *King* threatens a *Malefactor* to the *Dungeon*, to the *Racke*, to the *wheel*, his bones tremble, a terrible palſie runs through all his joynts: But let *God* threaten the unſufferable tortures of burning *Tophet*; we ſtand unmoved, undaunted. But *be not deceived, God is not mocked*, Gal.6.7. *And it is a fearfull thing to fall into the hands of the living God; who is a conſuming fire*, Heb.12.29.

True, *He that maketh gain, bleſſeth himſelf*, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks, *Pſal.* 10.3. Yea, if he can (I mean the cunning *Machevillian*, whom the *Devil* and covetouſneſs hath blinded) any way advantage himſelf, by anothers ruine; and do it politickly: how will he hugge himſelf, and applaud his own wiſdom. *Hab.*1.13, to the end. But by his leave, he miſtakes the greateſt folly, for the greateſt wiſdome: For while he cozens other men of their eſtates; *Sinne* and *Satan* cozen him of his ſoul, ſee *Job* 20.15. 1 Tim.6.8,10. And woefull gain it is, that comes with the ſouls loſs. And how can we think thoſe men to have reaſonable ſouls, that eſteem money above themſelves! that prefer a little baſe pelfe; before *God*, and their own *ſalvation*.

Nor are there any ſuch fools, as theſe crafty knaves: For as *Auſtin* ſpeaks; If the *Holy Ghoſt* terme *that rich Churle in the Goſpel a fool*, that only *laid up his* own *Goods* Luke 12.18,20. find out a name for him that takes away other mens?

Theſe things conſidered, (*viz.*) the curſe of *God* here, both upon the party, and his poſterity: and the eternall wrath of *God* hereafter (together with the folly and madneſs of preferring *Earth*, yea *Hell*, to *Heaven*; time to *eternity*, the *body* before the *ſoul*; yea, the *outward eſtate*, before either *ſoul* or *body*) exempt your ſelf out of the number of thoſe fools, as little *Zacheus* did: what you owe, pay it; If you have wronged any man of ought, reſtore it; though you part with a great part of your Eſtate. Yea, admit you ſhall leave your ſelf a begger, do it: for (as you ſee) there is a neceſſity of it: Yea, there is wiſdome, and gain in it; for when all is done, *how to be ſaved is the beſt plot*: And better it is to caſt your evill gotten Goods over boord, then make ſhipwrack of Faith, and a good Conſcience, read *Job* 20. from verſ.5. The *Merchant* will caſt even his *Pallayne* into the *Sea*, to ſave himſelf. And he that is troubled with an *aking tooth*, finds it the beſt way to pluck it quite out.

Here I might ſhew you both from the Word, and a world of inſtances that

that restoring and giving rather then sinning, is the way to grow rich; I mean in pecuniary riches, see *Prov.*11.24. and 28.27. *Mark.*10.29,30. *Mat.*6.33. 2 *Cor.*6.9,10,11. 2 *Chron.*25.9. and 27 6. *Deut.*7.13, to 16. and 28.1, to 14, 2 *King.*6.25, to *Chap.*7. *vers.*17. *Psal.*34.9,10. and 37. 26,28. and 112.3. and 37.3,4,5. *Luke* 18.29,30. *Mark* 4.24. *Hag.*1.2. *Chapters*, *Mal.*3.10,11,12.

But I fear least addition in this case, should bring forth substraction: Yea, if this weary you not, its well; for I may conjecture, that time, and the deceitfulness of riches have wrought in you a change, since we were first acquainted. Wherefore before I go any further, a question would be asked, Doth covetousness reign in you? Are you yet bewitcht with the love of money? Is your heart rivited to the Earth? Are you already inslaved to this sin? doe you make Gold your God? and commodity the stern of your Conscience. For if so, all labour hitherto is lost; and all that can more be said, will be to no purpose: Yea, it is to no more end to admonish you, then to knock at a deaf mans door, or a dead mans grave, and that for sundry reasons.

First, Because as there is no colours so contrary, as white and black. No elements so disagreeing, as fire and water: so there is nothing so opposite to graee, and conversion; as covetousness. And as nothing so alienates a mans love from his vertuous Spouse, as his inordinate affection, to a filthy strumpet: so nothing does so far separate, and diminish a mans love to *God*, and heavenly things: as our inordinate affection to the World, and earthly things. Yea, there is an absolute contrariety, and impossibility between the love of *God*, and the love of Money: *Ye cannot serve* God *and riches*, Luke 16.13. All those that doted upon *Purchases*, and *Farms*, and *Oxen*; *with one consent*, *made light of it*, *when they were bid to the Lords supper*, Luke 14.16, to 21. The *Gadarens*, that so highly prised their *Hogs*: would not admit *Christ* within their *borders*, Luke 8.37. *Judas* that was covetous and loved money, could not love his Master: and therefore sold him. When *Demas began to imbrace this present world*: *he soon forsook Paul*, and his soul saving Sermons, 2 *Tim.*4.10.

If a mans affections be downward, his hope and inheritance cannot be above. And they that expect no life after this, will make as much of this as they can.

Secondly, If a covetous man do repent, he must restore what he hath wrongfully gotten, which perhaps may amount to half, or it may be three parts of his Estate at a clap: which to him is as hard, and as harsh an injunction, as that of *God* to Abraham, Gen.22.2. *Sacrifice thy Sonne*, *thine onely Sonne Isaac*. Or as that of *our Saviours to the young man*, Luke 18.22. *Sell all that ever thou hast*, *and distribute unto the poor*: And is there any hope of his yielding? No, *Covetousness is Idolatrie*, Eph. 5.5. Col. 3. 5. And Gold is the covetous mans God: and will he part with his God, a certainty for an uncertainty? No. A godly man, is content to be poor in outward things, because his purchase is all inward: but nothing except the assurance of heavenly things, can make us willing to part with earthly things. Neither can he contemn this life, that knows not the other: and

so

ſo long as he *keeps the weapon* (evill gotten goods) *in his wound*, and reſolves *not to pluck it out* by reſtoring: how is it poſſible he ſhould ever be cured? Whence it is that we ſhall ſooner hear of an hundred *Malefactors* contrition at the *Gallows*, then of one *covetous Mizers* in his *bed*. To other ſins, *Satan* tempts a man often: but covetouſneſs is a *fine*, and *recovery* upon the *purchaſe*. Then he is ſure of him; as when a *Jaylor* hath lockt up his *Priſoner* ſafe in a *Dungeon*, he may go play.

Thirdly, Covetous men, are blind to all dangers; deaf to all good inſtructions: they are beſotted with the love of money, as Birds are with their bane. Yea they reſolve againſt their own converſion: The *Scribes* and *Phariſees who were covetous: ſhut their eyes, ſtopt their ears, and barrocadoed their hearts* againſt all our *Saviour* did, or ſaid. Yea, they *ſcoft at his preaching*. And of all ſorts of ſinners, that *Chriſt* preached unto: he was never ſcorned nor mockt but by them; *when he preached againſt covetouſneſs*, Luke 16.14. And well may rich worldlings, ſcoffe at *Chriſts* poor *Miniſters*: when they thinke themſelves as much wiſer as they are richer, and commonly, the *cunning Politician* is wiſer then his *Paſtor*; or indeed any of his *plain dealing Neighbours*; by five hundreth, if not five thouſand pounds.

Theſe things conſidered, no wonder that our *Saviour* expreſly affirmeth, that *it is eaſier for a Camel to goe through the eye of a needle, then for a rich man* (that is a covetous rich man) *to enter into the Kingdome of Heaven*, Luke 18.25. And the *Apoſtle, That no covetous man, can look for any inheritance in the Kingdome of Chriſt, and of God*, Ephe.5.5. 1 Cor.6.9,10.

Secondly, Hence it is, that in all the Word of *God*, we read *not* of *one* that was *covetous*, *but Hypocrites*: as *Laban*, and *Naball*, and *Judas*, and the *rich Fool*, and the *Phariſees*. For though *Zacheus* (before he met with *Chriſt*) knew nothing but to ſcrape: yet ſo ſoon as *Chriſt* had changed his heart, all his mind was ſet upon reſtoring, and giving, *Luke* 19.8. which alſo was a miracle, like his curing of him that was *ſick of the dead Palſie*, Mat.9.2, to 7. And *Chriſt* did ſome miracles, which none of his *Apoſtles* were able to doe, Mat.17.16.

And indeed, it is a ſinne ſo damnable, and inconſiſtent with grace: that of all ſinnes, the *children of God* have *cleared themſelves from covetouſneſs*, when they would approve their integrity before *God* and *Men*. Thus did *Samuel*, 1 Sam.12.3. and *Jeremiah*, Chap.15.10. and *Paul*, *Acts* 20.33. and *Job*, Chap.31.24,28. and *Agar*, Prov.30.8. and *David*, Pſal.4 6,7. and *Solomon*, 1 King.3.5,9. and *Zacheus*, and in fine all that feat *God*, 1 *Cor*.7.30,31,32. Their expreſſions are very remarkable: but I may not ſtand to repeat them.

We find many acts of deception in the *Saints* infirmity in thoſe acts; But covetouſneſs, that idolatrous ſinne we find not. Once *Noah* was drunk with wine, never drunk with the *World*. *Lot* was twice inceſtuous, never covetous. *Peter* denied his Maſter thrice: it was not the love of the World, but rather the fear of the World that brought him to it: for he had denied the World, before he denyed his Maſter. Once *David* was overcome with the fleſh, never with the World. Grace may ſtand with ſome tranſient acts of naughtineſs, but never with covetouſneſs: thoſe were acts, avarice is an habit.

Covet-

Covetousnes is flat idolatrie, which makes it out of measure sinfull, and more hainous then any other sinne, as appears, *Col.*3.5. *Ephe.*5.5. *Job* 31. 24,28. *Jer.*17.5. 1 *Tim.*6.9,10. Fornication is a foul sinne; but nothing to this: that pollutes the body, but covetousnes defileth the soul: and the like of other sinnes. Yea, it is such a sordid, and damnable sinne; that it ought *not once to be named among Christians*, but with detestation. *Ephe.*5.3. Nor ought covetous persons to be admitted into Christian society, 1 *Cor.*5. 11.

Thirdly, From hence it is; that the whole *Bible*, all the *Sermons* men hear; yea, the *checks* of their own *consciences*, and the *motions of* Gods *spirit*, *judgements*, *mercies*, and what else can be named, prove altogether *ineffectuall*. And that there is so small a part of the world, scarce one of an hundreth; that runs not a whoring after this Idoll, and is not in too great a degree covetous. That *from the least, even unto the greatest, every one is given unto covetousnes, and to deal falsly*, Jer.6.13. and 8.10. (For I may speak it with fear and trembling) where shall we find a just *Cato*, *Rom.*13. 7. Where can we meet with a sincere single hearted *Nathaniel*,, *in whose spirit there is no guile*, John 1.47. where with a *Job*, *an upright*, *and just man*, *Job* 1.1. Where with a *Samuel*, that can be acquitted by himself in private, by others in publique, by *God* in both, 1 *Sam.*12.3. where with a *Paul* that can say *I have coveted no mans silver*, *nor gold*, Acts 20.33. and 24.16. where with one that *does unto all others*, *as he would have others do unto him*, as our *Saviour* requires, Mat.7.12. Where is a *Jonathan*, 1 Sam. 23.16,17. or an *Eliezer*, Gen.15.2 to be heard of, that is not troubled at, but can rejoyce in their welfare, by whom themselves are deprived of great honour, and Revenues. O that I could be acquainted with three such men.

And yet *justice* is the *mistres of all virtues*; and the truest triall of a good man. For as the *Touch-stone tryes Gold*, so Gold tryes men: and there is little or no danger of that soul, which will not bite at a golden hook.

Ministers wonder that their *Sermons* take no better; That among so many *Arrows*, *none* should *hit the marke*: but *God* tells us the reason, *Ezek.*33. *They sit before thee*, *and hear thy words*: *but their hearts goe after their covetousnes*, *vers.*31. O this golden Devil, this *Diana* hath a world of worshippers: For how to gain, is every mans dream from sun, to sun, so long as they have one foot out of the grave. Yea, it destroyes more souls, then all other sinnes put together, as the *Apostle* intimates, 1 Tim.6.10. But were men so wise, as they think themselves: Yea, did they but truly love themselves, and covet to be rich indeed, and not in conceit only: they would both know and believe, that *better is a little with righteousnes*, *then great Revenues without equity*, Prov.16.8. And (to omit all that hath been formerly said) that ill gotten goods, lye upon the conscience, as raw meat upon a sick stomack; which will never let a man be well, untill he hath cast it up again by restitution. That sinne arms a man against himself; and our peace ever ends with our innocencie; That guilt occasions the conscience, many a secret wring; and gives the heart many a sore lash. Or if *Satan* finds it advantagious, to lull us asleep for a time: yet when *death besieg'th the body*, *he will* not fail to *beleaguer the soul*: and that then there will be

more eaſe in a neſt of Hornets, then under the *ſting of* ſuch a *tormenting con-ſcience*. And certainly, did you know what a good conſcience, and *the peace of God which paſſeth all underſtanding* is; you would think it more worth, then all the worlds wealth, multiplied as many times, as there be *ſands on the ſea ſhore*, that any thing, that every thing were too ſmall a price for it. That things themſelves, are in the inviſible world: in the world viſible, but there ſhadows onely. And that whatſoever wicked men enjoy, it is but as in a dream: that their plenty is but like a *drop of pleaſure*; before a *river of ſorrow*, and diſpleaſure: and that whatſoever the godly feel, but as *a drop of miſery*, before *a river of mercy and glory*. And laſtly, That ſhallow honeſty will prove more profitable in the end, then the profound quick-ſands of craft and pollicy.

Wherefore *let your converſation be without covetouſneſs, and be content with that you have* (I mean remaining, after you have faithfully, and impartially given to every man his own.) *For God hath promiſed, never to leave or forſake you*, if you will rely upon him, in the uſe of lawfull means only. *Heb.* 13. 5. And (with which I will conclude) *bethink your ſelf now* I beſeech you, rather then when *it will be too late*; when the *Draw-bridg* is taken up, and when *it will vex every veine of your heart*; *that you had no more care of your ſoul.*

And ſo much for recovery of *the covetous*: now a pill for *the prodigall*. It is our *Saviours* rule, ſo to diſpoſe of that plenty which *God* in his goodneſs hath beſtowed upon us: *that nothing be loſt*, *John* 6. 12. And it is a rule, which all good men will be ſure to obſerve. For,

He who gets what he hath *juſtly*:
Pays what he owes duly:
Requites favours received *thankefully*:
Conſiders the caſe of the poor *cordially*:
Will not, yea dares not ſpend *prodigally*:
Let means come in never ſo *plentifully*:
And yet he of all men, is ſure of a laſting competency, *Pro.* 21. 27. *James* 4. 2, to 10.

Frugality, ſaies *Juſtin*, is the mother of vertues: but an expenſive man (whatſoever his gettings be) is like that luſty *Giant Eriarius*: who had nothing to ſhew of all his comings in; becauſe his *fifty bellies*, did conſume the gettings of his *hundred hands*. The *veſſel* that *runneth* out unduly, will be *empty*, when we come to *draw* out of it. And the *Prodigal*, may moſt fitly be reſembled to *a crackt veſſel*; or to that *Captain* in *Tully*, who was not a penny the richer, for that huge ſumme of money given him: becauſe he had done with it, as *a naked man* would do with the *nuts* he *gathers*, *carry* them all away in his *belly* for lack of pockets.

FINIS.